

REMARKS

Claims 13-19 and 22-32 remain in this application. Claims 1-12 and 20-21 are now canceled. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Independent claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), along with claims 14-18, 22, 24, and 26-32, which depend on claim 13, as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,941,597 to Horiuchi et al. Independent claim 13 above is amended to include limitations previously appearing in now-canceled claims 20 and 21 as well as several additional limitations, however, and the anticipation rejection based on the Horiuchi et al. patent is moot.

Claims 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), along with claim 19, as unpatentable over the Horiuchi et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent 5,398,989 to Winter et al. As far as this rejection may be considered applicable to claim 13 as amended above, reconsideration is requested.

Claim 13 above defines a door pillar including, in combination with the other elements specified, a pillar body that extends at least in an upper section and is made of a first, iron or iron alloy material, and a pillar base, which is fixedly cast onto the pillar body, extends at least in the lower section, and is configured as a single-part thin-walled cast part made of a second, light metal or light metal alloy material. Advantages of casting the pillar base onto the pillar body as specified are discussed throughout the specification of the present application (attention is directed, for example, to paragraphs 0009, 0023, and 0025-0026 of the substitute specification), while advantages of utilizing the first and second materials specified are discussed, for example, in paragraph 0007 of the substitute specification.

It is respectfully submitted that the rationale provided in the fourth full paragraph on page 4 for the proposed modification to the Horiuchi et al. structural member is inappropriate. In sections 2 and 5 on pages 2-4 of the Office Action, the Horiuchi et al. panel stiffener 12, inner pillar 13, and reinforcing member 16 are collectively identified by the Examiner as a “pillar body,” while the Horiuchi et al. outer panel 11 is identified by the Examiner as a “pillar base.” While a steel pipe 17 is included in the Horiuchi et al. embodiment shown in Figure 4, all elements of the “pillar body” and the “pillar base” identified by the Examiner are made of light alloy (see, for example, column 3, lines 45-49 and column 4, lines 23-27). Nothing noted by the Examiner suggests that anything other than optimum pillar strength is provided by the Horiuchi et al. member in its original configuration. Moreover, simply because various “processes” may be known in a particular technological field does not in any way suggest that such “processes” are interchangeable. The obviousness rejection based on the Horiuchi et al. and Winter et al. patent disclosures is thus not applicable to claim 13 as amended above.

In section 6 on page 4 of the Office Action, U.S. Patent 6,378,933 to Schoen et al. is relied on as an additional secondary reference to reject dependent claim 25. The Schoen et al. disclosure fails to eliminate the deficiencies in the obviousness rejection based on the Horiuchi et al. and Winter et al. patent disclosures discussed, however, and claim 13 as it appears above is considered patentable. All other claims remaining in this application depend on claim 13 and are considered patentable as well, and it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in allowable condition.

If there are any questions regarding this Reply or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an extension of time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #095309.57812US).

Respectfully submitted,

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